

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for reconfiguring a computer system to accommodate changes in a display environment, comprising the steps of:

5 detecting the addition or removal of an input/output device in the computer system;

determining whether an input/output device which has been added or removed is a video device, in response to said detection;

10 providing a notification to a display manager that a video device has been added or removed; and
modifying the allocation of display space to display devices via said display manager, in accordance with the addition or removal of a video device.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the video device comprises a video card that includes a frame buffer, and said modification step includes assigning a portion of the display space to the frame buffer of an added video card, or deleting the assignment of a portion of the display space to a removed video card.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said display manager further carries out the step of storing a preferences file that identifies the status of displayed objects prior to a change in the configuration of a computer.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein, upon detection of the addition of a video device, said display manager repositions objects in said display space, in accordance with a status stored in said preferences file.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said video device is a display device, and said display manager carries out the step of assigning a respective

frame buffer, which corresponds to an allocated portion of the display space, to a corresponding display device.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein, upon detection of the addition of a video device, said display manager causes a software program associated with the added device to be launched

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said display manager further carries out the step of reconfiguring a computer resource to correspond to the status of objects located in the display space.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said computer resource is a color look-up table.

9. The method of claim 1, further including the step of recognizing an error condition resulting from an attempt to address a frame buffer that has been removed, providing a notification to said display manager in response to said error condition, and deleting an allocation of display space to the removed frame buffer.

10. A system which provides hot-plugging capabilities for display devices, comprising:

a video device including a frame buffer for storing data that defines an image to be displayed on an associated display device;

5 a display manager which defines a display space and assigns a portion of said display space to said frame buffer, and which provides data for images to be displayed to said frame buffer; and

10 a device manager which detects the addition or removal of the video device to a computer system, and provides a notification of such addition or removal to the display manager to cause the assignment of a portion of the display space to be modified in accordance with a detected addition or removal.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein said display manager launches a software program associated with the video device in response to notification that the video device has been added.

12. The system of claim 11 further including a preference file stored in memory which indicates the status of objects being displayed when a video device is removed.

13. A system which provides hot-plugging capabilities for display devices, comprising:

- at least one display for displaying images;
- a display manager which defines a display space and assigns a portion of said display space to a display device, and which provides data for images to be displayed on said display device; and
- a device manager which detects the addition or removal of a display device in a computer system, and provides a notification of such addition or removal to the display manager to cause the assignment of a portion of the display space to be modified in accordance with a detected addition or removal.

14. The system of claim 13 further including a frame buffer which is associated with an assigned portion of the display space, and wherein said display

manager modifies said assignment by associating said frame buffer with said display device.

15. The system of claim 13 further including a preference file stored in memory which indicates the status of objects being displayed when a display device is removed.

16. A computer-readable medium containing a device manager program and a display manager program, wherein said device manager program performs the steps of

- 5 detecting the addition or removal of an input/output device in a computer system,
- determining whether the input/output device is a video device, and providing a notification to the display manager program when a video device is added or removed;
- 10 and wherein said display manager performs the step of: modifying the allocation of display space to display devices in response to said notification from the device manager.

17. The computer-readable medium of claim 16, wherein said display manager further performs the steps of storing a preference file relating to the status of objects appearing on a display device, and restoring objects to the status stored in the preferences file when a video device is added.

18. The computer-readable medium of claim 16, wherein said display manager performs the step of assigning a respective frame buffer to a display device in response to said notification.

19. The computer-readable medium of claim 16, wherein said display manager performs the further step of launching a software program in response to said notification.

20. The computer-readable medium of claim 16, wherein said display manager performs the further step of reconfiguring at least one computer resource in accordance with the modification of the display space allocation.

21. The computer-readable medium of claim 20, wherein said computer resource is a color look-up table.